GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:214
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2005
CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES
Mane Smt. Nivedita;Singh Shri Sugrib

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

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(a) Whether the Government has constituted a Task Force on bringing all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes under the Panchayati Raj Institutions;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Task Force;

(c) whether the Government has accepted and implemented these recommendations;

(d) if so the details in this regard; and

(e) if not, the reasons for the delay and the time by which these are likely to be implemented?

Answer

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) FOR LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.214 DUE FOR REPLY ON 17/03/2005 REGARDING `CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEMES`

(a) The Union Government has not set up any Task Force under the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on bringing all Centrally Sponsored Schemes under Panchayati Raj Institutions. However, a Task Force of officials in charge of Panchayati Raj in the States was constituted with Secretary (Panchayati Raj) Government of Karnataka as Convenor in pursuance of a decision taken in the fifth Round Table Conference of State Ministers of Panchayati Raj held at Srinagar on 28-29 October, 2004. The objective of the Task Force was to examine the Centrally Sponsored Schemes as these are currently being implemented in the States in the context of the role these schemes provide to the PRIs in planning and implementation of these schemes in accordance with the provisions of Part-IX of the Constitution and the State Legislations on Panchayati Raj. The recommendations of the Task Force were presented to the State Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj during the seventh Round Table Conference held at Jaipur and were unanimously adopted by the Ministers in charge of Panchayati Raj in the States.

(b) The main recommendations of the Task Force are as under :

(i) Every State ought to undertake Activity Mapping in the manner agreed and this ought to be the necessary pre-condition to its seeking Centrally Sponsored Schemes reform. This Activity Mapping should set out not only what the three tiers ought to do, but also what the State will and will not do. It is further suggested that each Ministry of the Government of India also ought to undertake an Activity Mapping exercise that clearly sets out, in accordance with subsidiarity principle, what they need to do at their level and leave out what they need not do, which can be done at the State or Panchayat level.

(ii) Once Central Ministries undertake Activity Mapping (which can be through a consultative exercise) they are ideally placed in modifying individual scheme guidelines to be in tune with their Activity Mapping and those of the States.

(iii) Departments ought to broadly accept a threshold of allocation, below which a scheme need not exist. Initiatives of Central Departments in simplifying and rationalising the scheme will improve the process of plan formation, implementation and monitoring.

(iv) All parallel bodies created by, or through the scheme conditionalities of CSSs ought to be wound up.

(v) Safeguards may be put in place to ensure that money does reach the Panchayats promptly and is not delayed or diverted.

(vi) For putting in place baseline standard accounting and auditing, the directions made during the sixth Round Table at Guwahati be pursued within a specific time frame.

(vii) One pre-condition for the reform of CSSs should be that the Centre insist on a legal and administrative framework for holding Panchayats to account for transparency and for full and voluntary disclosure of information.

(viii) A good monitoring system should be in place for making evaluation a part of the daily routine. For this purpose Task Force recommend advising prompt, web-based monitoring of performance of Panchayats down to the village level.

(ix) An exercise should be undertaken to explore whether there can be cross conversion amongst the `Big 18` schemes and additional Central Assistance Schemes.

(c)(d)&(e) These recommendations have to be implemented by the State Governments. The Union Government will provide all assistance to the States in implementing these recommendations. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj will be initiating a process of meetings and visits to the States/UTs to review progress in implementing these recommendations by the States/UTs. These steps will continue through 2005-06 and subsequent years with sectoral conferences and visits to State/UT.